

The Spanish Move North

(Chapter 7, Lesson 1)



Fighting for Florida

1. New Spain stretched from South America to Mexico with its capital in Mexico City. Spanish leaders decided to extend their colony into Florida. The Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de Leon had traveled through this region in the early 1500s. Now the Spanish hoped that a settlement in Florida would prevent the French or English from gaining foothold in this part of North America.
2. In 1565 Pedro Mendenez de Aviles led a small fleet of Spanish warships to Florida. Menendez knew that the French had already started building settlements in Florida. His mission was to find the French, defeat them, and take control of Florida for Spain. In a series of bloody battles, Menendez and his soldiers defeated the French. Florida became part of New Spain. The Spanish founded St. Augustine on the east coast of Florida. This was the first permanent European settlement in what is now the United States.

New Mexico

3. The Spanish began expanding into what is now the Southwest region of the U.S. In 1598, Don Juan de Onate led a small Spanish army north across the Rio Grande. The Spanish called this region New Mexico. The town of Santa Fe was found in 1610 and named the capital of New Mexico. The Pueblo, Apache, and Navajo people had been living on this land for centuries. Now the Spanish were claiming it.
4. The Spanish hoped to find gold and silver in New Mexico. They soon realized, however, that the region was not rich in these materials. New Mexico was also too hot and dry for many kinds of farming. The open grasslands, were good for sheep and cattle ranching. Some wealthy ranchers built haciendas, or large estates.

These were often self-sufficient communities, with vegetable gardens, workshops and mills.

5. Spanish religious leaders began building missions in New Mexico to try to convert the Native Americans to Christianity. To protect the missions, the Spanish built presidios, or military forts.
6. To connect New Mexico to Mexico city, the Spanish built a road called El Camino Real, the "Royal Road". It was used to carry goods between Mexico City and Santa Fe.

The Pueblo Revolt

7. The Pueblo leader named Popé led a revolt against the Spanish in New Mexico. For many reasons, many Pueblo people were ready to join in this fight. The Spanish were enslaving Pueblo people, sending some to Mexico and forcing others to work on ranches and missions in New Mexico. Spanish settlers were taking over Pueblo land and villages. The Spanish leaders were trying to force the Pueblo to give up their traditional ways of worshiping and living.
8. The Pueblo attacked settlements all over New Mexico. Joined by the Apache and Navajo fighters, Popé and his men surrounded Santa Fe. A Pueblo leader named Juan rode into the city carrying two crosses, one white and one red. The Spanish refused to leave New Mexico. The Pueblo continued their attacks. In fierce fighting that became known as the Pueblo Revolt. The Spanish were driven out of New Mexico.

The Spanish Return

9. By the 1690's, Popé died and the Pueblo people and other people in the region were not as united as they had once been. The Spanish recaptured New Mexico from the Pueblo in 1692. Spanish missionaries and settlers began moving back to New Mexico. They also moved into land that is now Texas and Arizona. The town of San Antonio was founded in 1718. Leaders hoped to keep control of the Southwest. They were also concerned that the French might try to take over the region.
10. New Spain continued to expand throughout the 1700s.